Muscle Madness
Psychobehavioral Characteristics of Competitive Bodybuilders: A Longitudinal Study.
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PROBLEM STATEMENT
Mental health experts state that thousands of males suffer from extreme physical and mental distress as a result of obsessive attitudes and behaviors aimed at increasing their muscle size.

Competitive bodybuilding is associated with the development of eating pathology, impaired social functioning, heightened anxiety, and extreme exercise regimes.

WHAT IS KNOWN
• Psychological Disorders (Pope et al., 1997).
• Social Dysfunction (Grieve, 2007).
• Heightened Anxiety (Olivardia, 2000).
• Compulsive Exercise (Mosley, 2009).
• Eating Disorders (Connan, 1998).

HOWEVER
Pathology explicitly or implicitly inferred in this cohort as a result of Case Studies Anecdotal Evidence Cross-sectional data

An important element of diagnosing pathology is to determine if the severity of behaviour is just a function of the current situation, or extends over time (Davis, 2010).

Previous research shows that competitive athletes in mainstream sports cycle training and dietary strategies around competitive schedules.

Therefore..................

HYPOTHESIS
Eating and exercise behaviors of CB will not be temporally stable.
The behaviors will not negatively impact on perceived social function and anxiety.

METHOD
• Seventy-eight male Competitive bodybuilders (CB; n = 26; Mage = 30.65 years, SD = 5.0). Recreational weight trainers (RW; n = 26; Mage = 29.69 years, SD = 5.6). Non exercisers (NE; n= 26; Mage = 30.23 years, SD = 5.4).
• Assessed 6 times in ten month period. Measures completed on-line.
• Five consecutive months leading up to the season. Once when season finished.

RESULTS
Pre-competition, CB reported increases in disordered eating and exercise measures. Post-competition, intensity of behaviors significantly decreased. No between group differences emerged in the quality of social functioning and levels of anxiety.
The findings suggest that the behavioral strategies of CB are cyclical.

CONCLUSIONS
• Interpretations of cross-sectional data inferring temporally coherent impaired psychosocial functioning and eating disorder symptomatology may produce false-positives.
• Contextual and temporal factors may be important research considerations when investigating the competitive bodybuilding community.

REFERENCES